

Flight Service Station Survey: Initial Results

Background of the survey

The Center for Advanced Aviation System Development (CAASD) conducted an online survey in support of the FAA's study of Flight Service Stations. The objective of the Flight Service Station (FSS) survey was to gain a better understanding of how pilots use Flight Service Stations and related services, as well as the expectations they have regarding these services. The survey environment consisted of an interactive online questionnaire.

The question structure of this survey was "dynamic" in nature, where an individual's path through the survey was dependent upon responses. The dynamic structure format was used to reduce unnecessary questions and limit the time necessary to complete the survey. There were a maximum of 63 questions possible, and a minimum of 27 questions were asked of all participants. The predicted maximum time to complete the survey was estimated to be 20 minutes. To capture the most representative input from the user community, and to eliminate the risk of multiple submissions from one source, respondents were required to be certified U.S. pilots.

The FSS survey collected data on user satisfaction with current FSS services, the importance of specific services, the methods used to obtain flight-related information, and potential areas of improvement for FSS services. Participants were asked questions regarding their flight background and experience as a pilot, their experience with flight service stations, the methods used to obtain flight information, perceptions regarding quality of services and system performance and their interactions with Flight Service Station Specialists.

The goal of this research is to support the FAA's study of Flight Service Stations by providing pilots with an opportunity to provide inputs regarding: concerns about the future of FSS services (from the user's perspective); the outcomes the users would like to see from the FSS study; and user expectations about quality and performance in the FSS domain.

All Pilots Surveyed

Total Respondents: **3,550**

Average Hours of Flight Experience: **2,320** hours

Overall, **97.2%** of the respondents indicated they obtain weather information from Flight Service Stations.

Overall, **54.5%** of the respondents indicated that they file flight plans via Flight Service Stations only.

Overall, **35.1%** of the respondents indicated they use Flight Service Station services for most flights (or, 75-99% of the time).

When asked to indicate their level of agreement with this statement: "The current level of service that I receive from FSS meets my expectations"

92.4% of respondents indicated that they Strongly Agree or Agree.

When asked to indicate their level of agreement with this statement: "I rely on Flight Service

Stations to act as my primary provider of aviation-related National Security information" **86.3%** of respondents indicated that they Strongly Agree or Agree.

Overall the three items considered to be MOST IMPORTANT regarding the services received from Flight Service Station (FSS) facilities are:

1. Quality of Information received from FSS (the usefulness of the data): **82.6%**
2. Accuracy of the information received from FSS: **54.2%**
3. Quality of Service received from FSS (the level of customer service provided by the FSS Specialist): **34.8%**

Overall, the three items considered to be the MOST IMPORTANT AREAS OF POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENT for FSS or FSS-related services are:

1. Improved interactivity with Specialists (one-on-one, Internet, or in-person): **63.4%**
2. Enhanced data interpretation: **56.9%**
3. Personalization of services (tailoring services to individual experience levels): **46%**

Student Pilots

Total Number of Student Pilots: **29**

Average Hours of Flight Experience: **540**

When asked which systems or services they use to obtain weather information:

100% of Student Pilots indicated that they obtain weather information from Flight Service Stations.

55.2% of Student Pilots indicated that they file flight plans via Flight Service Stations only.

When asked how frequently they use Flight Service Stations services

51.7% of Student Pilots indicated they use FSS services for every flight (or 100% of the time).

When asked to indicate their level of agreement with this statement: "The current level of service that I receive from FSS meets my expectations" **96.5%** of Student Pilots indicated that they Strongly Agree or Agree.

When asked to indicate their level of agreement with this statement: "I rely on Flight Service Stations to act as my primary provider of aviation-related National Security information" **96.6%** of respondents indicated that they Strongly Agree or Agree.

The three items Student Pilots consider to be MOST IMPORTANT regarding the services received from Flight Service Station (FSS) facilities are:

1. Quality of Information received from FSS (the usefulness of the data): **100%**
2. Tailoring of services to my individual experience level and needs: **37.9%**
2. Unique localized services (specific to the needs of the local area): **37.9%**
3. Accuracy of the information received from FSS: **34.5%**
3. Quality of Service received from FSS (the level of customer service provided by the FSS Specialists): **34.5%**

The three items Student Pilots consider to be the MOST IMPORTANT AREAS OF POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENT for FSS or FSS related services are:

1. Improved interactivity with Specialists (one-on-one, Internet, or in-person): **55.2%**
2. Personalization of services (tailoring services to individual experience levels): **48.3%**

3. Enhanced data interpretation: **41.4%**
3. Better flight planning tools: **41.4%**

Private Pilots

Total Number of Private Pilots: **2,067**

Average Hours of Flight Experience: **930**

When asked which systems or services they use to obtain weather information:

97.8% of Private Pilots indicated that they obtain weather information from Flight Service Stations.

57.7% of Private Pilots indicated that they file flight plans via Flight Service Stations only.

When asked how frequently they use Flight Service Station services:

36% of Private Pilots indicated they use FSS services for most flights (or 75-99% of the time).

When asked to indicate their level of agreement with this statement: "The current level of service that I receive from FSS meets my expectations" **94%** of Private Pilots indicated that they Strongly Agree or Agree.

When asked to indicate their level of agreement with this statement: "I rely on Flight Service Stations to act as my primary provider of aviation-related National Security information." **88.9%** of Private Pilots indicated that they Strongly Agree or Agree.

The three items Private Pilots consider to be MOST IMPORTANT regarding the services received from Flight Service Station (FSS) facilities are:

1. Quality of information received from FSS (the usefulness of the data): **83.5%**
2. Accuracy of the information received from FSS: **55.2%**
3. Quality of Service received from FSS (the level customer service provided by the FSS Specialist): **35.3%**

The three items Private Pilots consider to be the MOST IMPORTANT AREAS OF POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENT for FSS or FSS-related services are:

1. Improved interactivity with Specialists (one-on-one, internet, or in-person): **63.8%**
2. Enhanced data interpretation: **57.4%**
3. Personalization of services (tailoring services to individual experience levels): **45.7%**

Commercial Pilots

Total Number of Commercial Pilots: **1,375**

Average Hours of Flight Experience: **3,290**

When asked which systems or services they use to obtain weather information:

96.9% of Commercial Pilots indicated that they obtain weather information from Flight Service Stations.

52.7% of Commercial Pilots indicated that they file flight plans via Flight Service Stations only.

When asked how frequently they use Flight Service Station services:

34.1% of Commercial Pilots indicated they use FSS services for most flights (or 75-99% of the time.)

When asked to indicate their level of agreement with this statement: "The current level of service that I receive from FSS meets my expectations" **91.1%** of Commercial Pilots indicated that they Strongly Agree or Agree.

When asked to indicate their level of agreement with this statement: "I rely on Flight Service Stations to act as my primary provider of aviation-related National Security information" **84.4%** of Commercial Pilots indicated that they Strongly Agree or Agree.

The three items Commercial Pilots consider to be MOST IMPORTANT regarding the services received from Flight Service Station (FSS) facilities are:

1. Quality of information received from FSS (the usefulness of the data): **81%**
2. Accuracy of the information received from FSS: **54.5%**
3. Quality of Service received from FSS (the level of customer service provided by the FSS Specialist): **33.4%**

The three items Commercial Pilots Consider to be the MOST IMPORTANT AREAS OF POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENT for FSS or FSS-related services are:

1. Improved interactivity with Specialists (one-on-one, internet, or in-person): **63.1%**
2. Enhanced data interpretation: **57.7%**
3. Personalization of services (tailoring services to individual experience levels): **45.5%**

Airline Transport Pilots

Total Number of Airline Transport Pilots: **479**

Average Hours of Flight Experience: **8,830**

When asked which systems or services they use to obtain weather information:

93.5% of Airline Transport Pilots indicated that they obtain weather information from Flight Service Stations.

39.2% of Airline Transport Pilots indicated that they file flight plans via Flight Service Stations only.

When asked how frequently they use Flight Service Station services: **30.1%** of Airline Transport Pilots indicated they use FSS services for most flights (75-99% of the time).

When asked to indicate their level of agreement with this statement: "The current level of service that I receive from FSS meets my expectations" **86.5%** of Airline Transport Pilots indicated that they Strongly Agree or Agree.

When asked to indicate their level of agreement with this statement: "I rely on Flight Service Stations to act as my primary provider of aviation-related National Security information" **77.6%** of Airline Transport Pilots indicated that they Strongly Agree or Agree.

The three items Airline Transport Pilots consider to be MOST IMPORTANT regarding the services received from Flight Service Station (FSS) facilities are:

1. Quality of Information received from FSS (the usefulness of the data): **80.8%**
2. Accuracy of the information received from FSS: **48.4%**
3. Quality of Service received from FSS (the level of customer service provided by the FSS Specialist): **33.2%**

The three items Airline Transport Pilots consider to be the MOST IMPORTANT AREAS OF POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENT for FSS or FSS-related services are:

1. Improved Interactivity with Specialists (one-on-one, internet, or in-person): **62.6%**
 2. Enhanced data interpretation: **49.3%**
 3. Personalization of services (tailoring services to individual experience levels): **48.4%**
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Geographic Breakdown of FAA Flight Regions

Southern	33%	(KY, TN, NC, SC, GA, MS, AL, FL, PR)
Great Lakes	29.7%	(ND, SD, MN, WI, IL, IN, OH, MI)
Eastern	25.5%	(NY, NJ, PA, MD, WV, DC, VA)
Southwest	21.1%	(NM, OK, AR, LA, TX)
Western Pacific	19.4%	(CA, NV, AZ, HI)
New England	17.4%	(CT, RI, MA, VT, NH, ME)
NW Mountain	14.5%	(WA, OR, ID, WY, MT, UT, CO)
Central	13.7%	(NE, IA, MO, KS)
Alaska	2.7%	

4.1% Indicated Intl, North America (Canada)

3.9% Indicated Intl, Caribbean/Gulf of Mexico & Mexico

1.0% Indicated International, Transatlantic

0.8% Indicated International, Transpacific

0.8% Indicated International, Central/South America

0.4% Indicated "Other"